[27 cont.]

The sword-shamans heal the sick, drive away demons, and practice soothsaying. In so doing, they wound themselves and the sick with the sword and burn themselves with fire, but if they are true shamans, this does not harm them.

Details

Dress: The shamans wear an ordinary long garment. Sometimes they also put on a robe similar to that of the Chinese bonze, except that it is red. They girdle themselves with a red belt. On the chest they wear an amulet with a god's figure or a little bag with the hada [scarf-like ceremonial cloth] that the lama has given them at the consecration. It is their tutelary spirit. They throw the wide shoulder-collar over it, which falls with the points over the chest, back, and shoulders. It is of various colors and often beautifully cut. They hang the breast-mirror on a red string over the shoulder collar. Formerly this was made of gold; now it is made of copper. The shaman rubs it to a shine with incense ashes. The mirror is round and has a diameter of 15 to 20 centimeters. In the middle it has a round protuberance, on which the tutelary deity's name is sometimes inscribed in Tibetan signs. Several colorful hada-cloths are suspended from the two eyelets of the mirror. -- On their heads the shamans wear a red headcloth. It is about 50 to 80 centimeters square. One tip is cut off to a breadth of about 20 centimeters; at these cut ends there are two red bands; the cloth looks like an irregular pentagon. They sew five small copper horse-rattles on the cut edge. The cloth is thrown over the head in such a fashion that the edge with the little bells runs across the forehead and the other tips fall down over the ears and shoulders. They fasten the cloth on the back of the head with the bands. -- Over this headcloth they then tie a five-part crown similar to that of the lamas (4).

4. [Foreign text p. 32.] The headcloth is not always of this kind. There are also cloths that are larger and that have no bells. In this case the shaman ties on a

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

costume, as follows: a long Chinese gown of black cloth, with a large flat collar, in the manner of the Taoist priests, crossing over the chest and buttoned on the left side. Over the gown he wears a coat of silk, adorned with flowers or dragons, having large sleeves and reaching below the knees. The coat is similar to the one worn under the empire by distinguished Chinese. The black color of the gown is unusual in the country and is confined to the shamans. Stress should be put on the startling difference existing between the simple official dress of the Monguor shaman and the official dress of many shamans among the nomads, whose main article of costume consists of a large mantle adorned with superstitious paraphernalia and symbols. Clothed in the mantle the shamans feel themselves possessed by their spirits; without it, they cannot perform their rites. This mantle is said to be worn by the black shamans living in the mountains south of the Hsining River. No traditions are prevalent to the effect that the Monguor shamans used the mantle in former times, but it is always said that they never wore it.

CINCTURE

The long black gown is belted by a long strip of black cotton, wrapped a couple of times around the waist, as all lay people do. The shamanists among the Mongols of Ordos take off their girdle [16] four times a year, while performing their important rite by means of prostrations, facing the sun. Chingis having escaped with his life from pursuing brigands took off his girdle, put it around his neck, and facing the sun, prostrated nine times.[17] Among the Monguors the girdle has not the same importance. Monguor shamans and shamanists never take off the sash when they honor "Heaven and all the spirits" or perform rites.

The Mongols of Ordos, if the bridegroom happens to become sick on the day of the marriage, marry the bride with his belt.[18] The Monguors do not perform such marriages, but when a girl has relations with a traveling guest, she asks for his girdle and name. If she becomes pregnant, she ceremoniously marries the girdle, is called Mrs. so-and-so, according to the name of the guest, and her child is similarly named.[19]

CAPS [20]

The Monguor shamans use three kinds of caps, all three black in color: the first is a kind of toque, a brimless pliable bonnet having a tassel of dog hair on top. This cap is similar to that of the Chinese Taoist priests. On the top of the cap, next to the tassel of dog hair, a hole is left through which is seen a hairpin which holds

[16] A. Mostaert, *Dictionaire Ordos*, 84.
[17] P. Pelliot, *Œuvres posthumes, Histoire secrète des Mongols*, Chap. II, paragraph 103, Paris, Adrien Maisonneuve, 1949.
[18] Mostaert, *op. cit.*, 176.
[19] L. Schram, *Mariage chez les T'ou-jen*, 130.
[20] Eliade, *op. cit.*, 148.

[p.83(A)]

Apprentices whoreceive part of their training for a couple of years from another shaman, during the summer time, and who acknowledge him as their master, offer him a gown upon completion of their education. In return, they receive a drum from him. The rules of apprenticeship among the shamans are the same as those already noted for other apprentices, such as carpenters.

The overwhelming magical significance attached to the drum by the nomad shamans is lacking among the Monguor shamans. Among the nomads, when the apprentice, after completing his depressing training, beats the drum for the first time, he becomes hypnotized and tranced.[25] Although the Monguor shamans consider the drum a sacred magical object, the same overriding importance is not attached to it.

The drum is built in a primitive way. A handle is attached to an iron circle with iron rings, which produce noise when the drum is beaten. On the iron circle is stretched a piece of goatskin, which has been soaked in water and shaved. On its surface are often painted crude pictures of heaven, with the sun, moon, the big and the little dippers, stars and clouds. The drumstick is usually made from peachwood or strips of goat hide twisted together.

THE KNIFE

The shamans use a knife when driving away the evil spirits. The knife is twelve inches long and two inches wide, and pointed at the end. To the handle are attached noisemaking iron rings. Sometimes the Chinese knife used for cutting noodles is substituted.

THE MAGIC STAFF

The staff, which is of wood, seems to be an important tool.[26] To the top is affixed a copper mirror surmounted by a three-pronged iron fork to which tassels of red rope are attached. The staff ends in an iron point, so that it may be planted erect in the ground during the time when council with the spirit is asked for. The magic staff is a tool used by lamas and Taoists as well as by shamans. The staff of the lamas differs from that of the shamans in that the mirror is surmounted by a copper skull, while above the skull is the point of a spear. The staff of the Taoists has an octagonal shaft with an iron point on top.

Each time, before performing a rite, the shaman asks his spirits in the staff about the most fitting rite for the circumstance, the sacrifice to be offered. The answer is supplied by the twelve spirits making the arms of the shaman shiver, and so he knows how to conjure evil spirits who harm persons, families, or herds. It is always called *Yang-t'ou san-ch'iang*. (I could never get an explanation of this Chinese term.) The staff is used when the shamans go into private families in order

[25] Nioradze, *op. cit.*, 79.

[26] Ugo Holmbergs, Siberian mythology, in *Mythology of all races* 4: 522, Boston, 1927.

[p.84(A)]